The Eighth Plan allocation is Rs. 8 crores.

Aged Couples in Neglected State

1439. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that most of the aged couples of the country are in a neglected state in-side and outside their houses;

(b) whether Government have enquired into the reasons therefor;

(c) what schemes Government propose to launch for their welfare together with the details thereof; and

(d) by when these are likely to be implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) A new Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organisations for Programmes relating to the Aged was launched in 1992-93 with a budget provision of Rs. 1 crore. The scheme aims at providing physical, social, emotional, psychological and economic support to the aged. The object of the scheme is to encourage voluntary organisations to provide old-age homes, day-care centres, medicare services, foster care/adoption services and non-institutional services for the aged. Grant-in-aid is provided on the basis of applications received through the State Governments. A provision of Rs. 3 crore has been made under this scheme for 1993-94.

Prevalence of Devadasi System

1440. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether "Devadasi' system is still prevalent in some parts of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken so far to prohibit the system and to evolve a rehabilitation project for Devadasis to help them earn their livelihood with honour and dignity ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESHWARI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is attached.

Statement

There is no specific law enacted by the Central Government for prohibiting the devadasi system in the country. However, this system attracts the provisions of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act,1956 (ITPA) as amended in 1978 and 1986. The Act envisages setting up of protective homes or corrective institutions for the care, protection treatment, education and rehabilitation of the rescued women and girls.

The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra have their own Acts viz. :

1. A.P. Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1988.